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Korth Quits Abruptly As Navy Secretary

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Nitze Named Successor
Resignation Follows
Overruling On Policy
By McNamara

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(San Military Correspondent)
Washington, Oct. 14—The White House today announced Fred Korth's abrupt resignation as Secretary of the Navy because of pressing business affairs.

The resignation was actually sent to the President last Friday—so soon after Robert S. McNamara, Secretary of Defense, overruled Navy recommendations for a new nuclear-powered aircraft carrier that the relationship of the two events is plain.

Indeed, there were reminders on Friday that a predecessor as Navy Secretary had resigned abruptly, likewise following disagreement with a Defense Secretary on a carrier issue.

McNamara's Decision Surprise
Korth, like the professional chiefs, the congressional Joint Committee on Atomic Energy, and the Atomic Energy Commission itself, had warmly supported the proposal to design the Navy's next big carrier for nuclear propulsion rather than oil-burner propulsion, on the basis of its great superiority of performance.

He apparently had fully ex-



FRED KORTH

pected approval of that proposal, even though McNamara had been delaying his decision for nine months.

On Thursday, McNamara's notification of a contrary decision clearly astonished Korth as much as it did the professionals.

Nitze Named Successor

That Korth's prompt resignation (he will be replaced on November 1 by Paul H. Nitze, currently Assistant Secretary of Defense for international security affairs) will end this grave controversy over speed-up or delay in modernizing the Navy with atomic propulsion is most unlikely.

Congressional leaders openly side with the Navy. Senator Pastore (D., R.I.), chairman of the joint committee, has already written McNamara of his colleagues' concern over Pentagon delay and announced that there will be committee hearings on that issue presumably not this week because of several other hearings to which witnesses have already been summoned.

Pastore is out of the city, and the nature of the Secretary's reply is not indicated. It may be noted, however, that late last week McNamara was reported as insisting that no "final" decision on the carrier's propulsion has yet been reached. The Navy thinks otherwise.

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Nuclear Advantages Cited

The viewpoint of the Atomic Energy Commission—well indicated during recent hearings on Capitol Hill—was laid before McNamara this afternoon by the commission's chairman, Glenn T. Seaborg, at a meeting in McNamara's office.

Pastore's letter of October 9 left no doubt that the committee has been deeply impressed by testimony at its closed hearings dealing with the superiority of atomic propulsion, notably that from Vice Admiral H. G. Rickover, the outstanding authority on that subject, and by its own observation of the sea performance of the U.S.S. Enterprise, at present the Navy's only atom-propelled carrier.

That performance has demonstrated to the committee's satisfaction that nuclear propulsion, which continues to develop under Rickover's own driving power, has these proven advantages:

1. The U.S.S. Enterprise needs no fuel replacement for months at a time. Thus it not only needs no fuel-supply sea "train," but suffers no delay for refueling en route, which means it can proceed on its mission without interruption.

2. Because there is no appreciable fuel consumption, too, it can proceed at top speed, rather than at the cruising speed which is the rule for oil-burners whose commanders are necessarily concerned with continuing fuel supply. This means that the Enterprise's operating range, as well as speed, is vastly increased.

3. The space aboard ship which formerly was required for storing both fuel oil for the ship and aviation fuel for the carrier's planes now is available in its entirety for the carrier's planes. These being the whole reason for the carrier's existence. This means that the planes, like the ship, have the full availability of operation.

The scientific and technological advances under Rickover have added greatly to atomic reactor efficiency since the Enterprise itself was built. That is, the vessel employs a reactor.

Smaller Space Requirement

The proposed new vessel would employ but four of the new and much more efficient type, meaning a much smaller space requirement below deck and exploitation of the voids either by building a somewhat smaller hull or by adding still more to the existing aviation fuel storage space, or by an economical employment of both possibilities.

Korth was unavailable for comment today as McNamara himself, for the Navy Secretary had already gone to the Pentagon for a minor administrative matter scheduled for tomorrow.

In his absence, the official announcement today as McNamara's reason for the delay in the